

and things into this House to present to the Speaker here in this floor of the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair at this moment is unable to identify a valid basis for a question of personal privilege. The Chair would encourage the gentleman to give the Chair a basis for decision.

Mr. GOHMERT. The law on its face and what we just passed exempted a territory. It should be very clear.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is not recognized.

#### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Joint Economic Committee:

Mrs. MALONEY, New York.

#### KEEP ECONOMY ROLLING

(Mr. FEENEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FEENEY. Madam Speaker, recently President Bush wrote that now is not the time to increase taxes on the American people. As the stock market hits an all-time high, employment is at an all-time high, unemployment is at a record low. Unfortunately, the first couple weeks in this House is not a good indication of Democratic leadership.

In week number one, we effectively repealed the three-fifths requirement to raise taxes.

In week number two, we passed a so-called PAYGO law that says any of the new liberal spending programs are going to be accompanied with huge new tax increases on the people of America.

And today, with the first major tax increase in 10 years, \$7 billion is put on the backs of American energy producers that will directly translate to higher gas prices at the pump.

I ask all of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, to sign a letter that is on your desk where we encourage the President to veto any bad tax increases, and we pledge to sustain that veto. Democrats and Republicans alike ought to keep this economy rolling. Please sign the letter that is on your desk. I welcome all of my colleagues to join me.

#### REMEMBERING WILFRED G. GOODEN

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Wilfred G. Gooden, who passed in January of this year. Wilfred G. Gooden was

a philanthropist, and certainly someone who loved his country, but loved service.

Born in Jamaica, West Indies in the Westmoreland area, he was a naturalized citizen. He came to New York City. In his commitment to serving the community, he became a master builder and opened a construction company in 1961 where he created jobs for young men and women in the Harlem area. He was a master artisan, a carpenter, a perfectionist in his work.

As he became an astute businessperson, he also was concerned about affordable housing for many in the New York area. Mayor David Dinkins appointed him to have the opportunity to devise a housing program for the City of Houston. But yet he continued to do more, and he was a great philanthropist, providing clothing and opportunity for the people of Jamaica. We pay great tribute to Wilfred Gooden, and we mourn his loss.

#### RAILROAD OVERSIGHT

(Mr. KUHLE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUHLE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an issue that concerns all of us, and that is railroad safety.

On Tuesday night, there was a train derailment near my congressional district in East Rochester, Monroe County, New York. Fortunately, no one was injured. There have been dozens of other derailments in New York: Recently, on December 28 along route 15 in Gang Mills, in which cars were carrying butane.

According to an online Federal Railroad Administration database, defective tracks have been the number one cause of train derailments since 1996 in New York and Monroe County.

Madam Speaker, I understand the role of railroads and the importance they serve in transporting goods and people across the country. As a member of the House Transportation Committee which oversees the railroad industry, I firmly believe that Congress must provide more thorough oversight of this industry.

Furthermore, I believe that Congress, CSX, and the Federal Railroad Administration and the Department of Environmental Conservation must work together to identify what must be done to avoid similar disasters in the future.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to create a safer, more efficient rail system for everyone.

#### AMERICAN SAMOA UNDER FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I just want to make a point of

clarification for my friend here from Texas, insinuating and implying there was something special given to my district, American Samoa, over this minimum wage issue.

I suggest the gentleman should read the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. American Samoa has been subjected to the minimum wage law since 1938. So I suggest to my Republican friends, they ought to check their law and find out what the situation has been.

The Northern Mariana Islands was not even in existence for the past 50 years, only until 1976. So I want to clarify that for the record. And I suggest to my friend from Texas, read the law before you start making accusations against the Speaker, insinuating and implying that her character, that she applied a double standard to the company that supposedly has been operating in my district. I suggest to my friend from Texas, read the law before you start attacking the Speaker on this matter.

#### ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CRISIS IN ARIZONA

(Ms. GIFFORDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, with the completion of the first 100 hours, I stand here today to discuss an issue of critical importance to southern Arizona, and that is our illegal immigration crisis.

Let me point out two recent events. On January 12, a Border Patrol agent had a deadly altercation with an illegal immigrant crossing into our district. That investigation is going on at this moment. A couple of weeks ago, members of the National Guard unit assigned to work with the Border Patrol were threatened by an armed gang that came into our country and then left. That incident is being looked at.

While many questions still surround these recent incidents, one thing is crystal clear: Now that our 100 hours are over, we must address the illegal immigration crisis and secure the border today.

We are putting our Border Patrol and the National Guard under tremendous strain. It is our responsibility to provide them with the necessary resources and the tools they need.

Fighting for a comprehensive immigration plan must be a priority for this Congress, Democrats and Republicans working together.

#### STRONG SUPPORT FOR H.R. 6, CLEAN ENERGY ACT

(Mr. BRALEY of Iowa asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I rise this afternoon to express my strong support for H.R. 6, the CLEAN

Energy Act of 2007. This bill will help move our country toward a goal shared by all Americans, a desire to reduce our dependence on foreign oil by shifting our energy emphasis from the Middle East to the Midwest.

According to the GAO, the United States has spent \$130 billion in the past 32 years in government subsidies to the oil industry. The CLEAN Energy Act of 2007 represents a bold new direction in our energy policy by creating a strategic renewable energy reserve to invest in clean renewable energy resources like ethanol, biodiesel and wind energy.

As someone whose family has been farming in Iowa for the past 150 years, I am proud that Iowa has been at the epicenter of the renewable fuels explosion and alternative energy boom with over 55 ethanol and biodiesel refineries built or under construction. Iowa also ranks third in wind energy production and tenth in wind energy potential in the United States.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to have had the privilege to have voted today for the CLEAN Energy Act of 2007.

#### CLOUD OF CORRUPTION

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I appreciate so much my friend from American Samoa coming in here. I am not casting any aspersions on him or his wonderful territory. I didn't throw allegations or aspersions on anyone. But there is a cloud of corruption hovering over this body that effects every one of us, and it would be so easy to get the air cleared. But there is really one person that could clear the air.

For so long people in this country cynically say: It is not what you know, it is who you know. Many of us say: That is not the case.

I believe if the Speaker would come forward, rise to a question of personal privilege, Madam Speaker, we could get this thing resolved and get it behind us so it is no longer an issue, and figure out how in the world a group, a territory got exempted that actually benefits a company in the Speaker's own district. And then we will be beyond it and move on in a bipartisan way, which I hope we will eventually have the opportunity to do.

□ 1845

#### ENERGY SECURITY

(Mr. SCHIFF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, in these opening weeks of the 110th Congress, the Democratic majority in the House has succeeded in passing a package of bills that is designed to secure America. We passed a bill to improve our Nation's ability to prevent another

9/11 style attack on our country. We have made life a little more secure for millions in the United States who toil at the minimum wage, and millions of young people who leave college with a degree and a mountain of debt. We have secured the ability of America's medical researchers to explore and exploit the life-saving potential of stem cells. We have committed this government to safeguarding our economic security by ending years of fiscal irresponsibility. And today, we have begun what may be the most important project of all, to ensure America's energy security by ending our dependence on foreign oil and developing clean, green renewable sources of energy.

Ensuring our energy security will require more than just the protection of American oil supplies from terrorists in hostile nations. It will also mean we find homegrown fuel sources that reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

It will mean that we pare down our energy consumption and promote efficiency. It will mean that we transition to renewable energy sources that ensure a clean, dependable energy supply for years to come.

There are those who say that it would cost too much to shift our infrastructure over to new energy sources. They say that the market has decided that coal and oil are the cheapest energy, and that switching to renewable energy would harm our economy.

This is shortsighted, false, and, ultimately, dangerous because much of the true cost of oil and coal don't appear on the gas pump or on our electric bills. Extracting coal and oil harms the environment and burning fossil fuels produces pollution that clogs our cities and greenhouse gases that warm our atmosphere. Tens of thousands of Americans get lung cancer and other respiratory diseases from power plant air pollution and this, too, is part of the true cost of "cheap" energy. These expenses are paid by the American people just as surely as they pay their electric bills.

But to find the true cost of a barrel of oil, we must look further, to a foreign policy beholden to oil and gas, and that price is too steep.

Today the House passed a bill that will roll back tax breaks for oil and gas companies and reform the royalty relief system that has cost American taxpayers billions of dollars. The \$13 billion dollars saved by this overdue reform will be placed in a strategic reserve to be spent on programs to accelerate the adoption of renewable energy and alternative fuels, promote energy efficiency, and step up research on advanced energy technologies. Initiatives like these are the only way to permanently reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and this bill is a good first step on the road to true energy security.

European and Asian competitors are already developing technologies that will reduce fuel consumption and lower emissions of greenhouse gases. Rather than American entrepreneurs, it is our competitors who are prospering from these developments. By marshaling America's great strengths, our inventiveness, our technological prowess, and our entrepreneurial spirit, we can better secure our Nation, save our environment, and become the world leader in this cutting-edge industry.

We must encourage the development of flexible-fuel and hybrid vehicles. These vehi-

cles can be built with today's technology and will enable a smooth transition from gasoline to biofuels.

We must raise the corporate average fuel economy standards.

We must invest in research and development of new energy technologies, like wind power, cheap solar cells, plug-in hybrid cars, and cellulosic ethanol. The new energy economy will be dominated by rapid innovation, and the scientific investment we make now will be paid back with interest by the technologies it creates.

We must encourage employers to offer mass-transit benefits so that employees can commute without their cars, and support mass transit systems around the country.

We must pass global warming legislation to reduce our output of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Many of America's most successful companies have realized that something must be done to contain global warming and they are now pushing Congress to lead.

We know what must be done to end our dangerous addiction to oil. All we need now is the will to do it.

Madam Speaker, we have lost so much time since 9/11, time that could have been so profitably used to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. But it is not too late to abruptly and constructively change course. The American people are ready for a clean energy economy, and the bill we passed today will begin to put our country on that new road to energy independence and a more secure future.

#### LOOKING FORWARD TO GREATER PARTICIPATION

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, the Democrat Party has just ended its 6 for 600 hours, or whatever they call it. I wish I had a clock at home that tracked hours the way the Democrats did. By that standard, I would be 25 years old, and probably look a lot better, as a matter of fact; more youthful.

But I want to say this. The Democrats did this agenda based on kind of, you know, trite, older, more established, safer issues. There was no real reach for the sky here; no entitlement reform, no tax simplification, no energy independence. What they did also was cram down a bunch of things that bypassed the committee process, and I want to give a contrast with the Contract With America.

The Contract With America was 24 pieces of legislation. The number of bills we had open to amendment was nine. The number of bills considered under a closed rule was only three. The numbers of bills considered under suspension of the rules was only two. The total number of Democrat amendments, 154, of which only 95 failed. Many, many Democrat amendments passed.

I hope, as we go into your next 200 or 300 hours, that we can have a more participatory democracy.